

MINUTES

NORTHEAST MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY – OCTOBER 8, 2003

A meeting of the Northeast Municipal Advisory Committee took place on the above date at 7:00 P.M. at Michael Ann Russell Jewish Community Center, 18900 Northeast 25th Avenue, Miami, Fl.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jaap Donath
Kenneth H. Friedman
Richard Golden
Glenn H. Gopman
William C. Koppel
Roslyn B. Weisblum

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY STAFF PRESENT:

Jorge M. Fernandez, Office of Management and Budget, UMSA Policy Analysis and Services
Miami-Dade Police Department
Police Services Bureau
Major Charles L. Thompson
Sergeant Alex Alfonso
Officer Kathleen Suarez
Officer Jack Simonton
Intracoastal District
Major Glenn Theobold
Commander Jack Solomon

OTHER SPEAKERS

Paul Novack, Mayor of Surfside

1. The meeting was called to order.

2. Ken Friedman, Chair

Ken Friedman opened the meeting stating that we would cover three things tonight:

1. Mayor from Surfside, Paul Novak, will be speaking to us.
2. Police Department has come with their numbers.
3. Committee work.

3. Presentation by Paul Novack, Mayor of Surfside

He is here to answer our questions about municipal finance, services, etc. Surfside is a small city with about 5,000 residents. They have a stable tax situation. He has been mayor for almost 12 years and they have never raised the millage rate. They have never incurred any debt. They have no bond issues, no special assessments, nothing to add on to the annual millage rate of 5.603. They are also in the County and pay tax to the County. On all of their homeowner's tax bills about 40% goes to the County Commission for their budget, about 40% goes to the School Board for their budget, and only about 18.5% goes to the municipality. The municipality provides over 80% of the public services.

Some people may think their millage rate means it is more expensive for people to live in their city but you have to look at the whole picture. For example, in most cities residents pay over \$400 per year in garbage fees, Surfside's rate is \$155 per year. They collect garbage and trash six days per week from every home, apartment, every public area, and every business block. Most places pay three times more for one-third the service. They have an excellent Police Department with an outstanding response time. Their goal is that when you hang up the phone two cars pull up. If it takes a minute longer than that, they accept that; after that it is not acceptable. We all want clean, safe, enjoyable neighborhoods with things we want in them. The city has independence and authority that they wouldn't have if they were not incorporated. Because he has a title, he can do things representing the people of his community. They are able to be strong advocates on issues of concern that go beyond their borders such as public education, safety, public transportation, and the County's priorities. They have not given a single zoning variance for height, density, or setbacks, since the day he took office. They have a great deal of redevelopment but it is all within the code. Buildings and the City have actually decreased their density. One of the good things about having a municipality is that it brings you much closer to those with the authority to run the community. He thinks generally the larger the government is, the less responsive it is, the less accountable it is, the more corruption there is, and the more inefficiency there is.

He asked for questions from the audience. Indian Creek is its own municipality; it has no public space. There is a \$19 annual recycling fee for once a week pickup. Garbage is picked up from the sides of the homes, not curbside. Trash may be left on the side or front. There are about 1250 single-family homes and a few thousand condominiums in Surfside. The homes take up the majority of the land space. They have a lot of road miles for their space. They had to do some traffic control measures to remove commuter traffic from residential areas. The County opposed them, sued them, and tried to stop them. Surfside did their traffic devices and they have remained in place. When Surfside did a major water project, they raised taxes for one year and then lowered them back down, so they did not have to take out a bond for the project. They put money aside so that they could pay cash to renovate the town hall. They have about a 9.5 million dollar budget. He can't think of any downside to being a city. The total tax most residents pay to the city is in the hundreds, not thousands. It is worth a few hundred dollars a year to have the services the city provides. He thinks it is the biggest bargain going. He thinks we need to get the County out of the neighborhood business and have them handle regional things. He runs for office every two years. As a local official he can fight for regional issues such as public schools; it gives the community a voice that they wouldn't have otherwise. A city should build a reserve. They have a 12-story limitation on the ocean and a 3-story limitation on the west side of Collins Avenue.

4. Presentation by Charles L. Thompson, Major, Miami-Dade Police Department

This is his second appearance at a NE MAC meeting. This time he will be more specific. The first time he came here he talked about the Miami-Dade Police Department, what it does, how it does it, when, where and how. Tonight they are going to talk about putting together our Police Department and talk about things that are germane to our future proposed city. Joining him tonight are the Major of the Intracoastal District, Major Glenn Theobald and Jack Solomon, his General Investigations Unit Commander; Sergeant Alex Alfonso; Officer Kathleen Suarez; and Officer Jack Simonton. He has been a County employee for 25+ years; he enjoys his job and he thinks he is very responsive to the citizens of Miami-Dade County, those that are in municipalities and those that are in UMSA.

They are going to talk about services provided by the Miami-Dade Police Department to newly incorporated municipalities. There was a handout distributed which itemized these services, which was also projected on overhead slides. The handout also defined types of "calls for service". It described the following in our proposed Police Department: geographical boundaries, personnel allocation methodology, number calls for service over a three year period, number of officers. The recommended number of officers to be assigned to our city to keep it safe, have the number of officers that we need is a minimum of 25. Total staff recommended is 40 (33 sworn and 7 non-sworn). Included in the 7 non-sworn support staff are 2 PRS (Public Records Specialists), 1 DES (Data Entry Specialist), 1 PCAS (Police Crime Analyst Specialist), 1 Secretary, 2 PSA (Public Service Aides). Your City Manager will set the tone for your Police Department. The enhanced staffing level would add 4 additional sworn officers (2 neighborhood resource officers and 2 motorcycle officers). Staffing set up on a Platoon System. Three Platoons and Relief. A proposed budget was included for the staffing. The costs are averages; we will be given a mixture of junior officers, mid-range officers, and senior officers. These figures are based on 2002-2003, and would change when using 2003-2004 figures. Enhanced enforcement initiative has been budgeted at \$100,000 to fight crime, which is what they recommend. The 8.88% overhead is subject to change. It is the same percentage for all of the cities that it includes. If we decide to put our police officers away from the Intracoastal District, we will receive a credit because part of the overhead is for housing the police officers. Based on these averages the total Police cost for recommended staffing is \$3,575,774. Enhanced staffing total is \$3,957,156. Four year Police Patrol Contract is required. Special municipal markings are optional.

He now opened the floor to questions. Jorge Fernandez stated the County currently spends 1.8 million in the area on police protection (local not specialized) but it is not reflective of what a Police Department would cost the area for local services. The 1.8 million is based on the calls for service for this geographical area at \$200 per call. We currently are part of a larger area called area 3, which has 37 officers. There may be from zero to 37 officers in our geographical area at any given moment. Once we become a city, on any shift we will have a designated number of officers and they are not going anywhere, because they are restricted to our area unless they have to give mutual aid. These officers are part of Miami-Dade County; they are eligible to be promoted within all of Miami-Dade County. If a sergeant in our city takes the Miami-Dade County promotional exam and passes it to become a lieutenant, that sergeant will leave and go to an assignment, and another sergeant will replace the sergeant. They cannot restrict the promotional opportunities. Even though we will have 25 officers, on any shift we will have 6 officers. Because we are very small, we will have very few calls for service. We only had 13,000 calls for service last year. That is only a little over 1,000 per month, which is very small in police terms. A lot of these are unfounded calls, calls handled at the police desk, burglar alarms, etc. When we become incorporated everyone knows who we are and the police officers on routine patrol will respond. The staff costs include all fringe benefits. We cannot reduce the recommended staff during the contract period; we can enhance the staff.

5. Major Glenn Theobald from the Intracoastal District is happy to tell us that crime is down in this district. The people that will be providing us with service if we incorporate are the same people that service us now.
6. Ken Friedman stated that there were two MACs that were disbanded but they have been brought back in one form or another. Both of those areas have come back not in the same shape they were in, but reconfigured.

7. Bill Koppel, chair of the budget committee, stated that the budget committee held a public meeting last week. He has a list of things the committee stills needs. He asked for volunteers to try to get some of the information for the committee. For example, someone to call the Public Works Department to get some information on expenses and staffing in our area; also the Parks and Works Department, Building and Planning Department, and various other places so they can get some estimates on expenses to put in the budget so they can have something that is relatively real as opposed to trying to invent numbers. A few people in the audience volunteered. The next meeting will be published in the Monday Miami Herald.
8. Jorge Fernandez stated that to get information on expenses we would want to look at other budgets. He said the Public Works Department is not going to give us a budget for what it is going to cost our area in terms of people and resources we may need, since they work on the County as a whole. They do not keep records specific to an area. He said to take a similar size city and see what they do. As far as the parks are concerned the County may be able to give us information regarding our particular parks.
9. Bill Koppel said that the volunteers could call comparable cities to get information as well. He asked people to watch for the advertisement and come to the next budget meeting.
10. Ken Friedman stated that Commissioner Jimmy Morales will be the speaker at the next meeting. Shirley Gibson, Mayor of Miami Gardens will be the speaker at the meeting after that.
11. Glen Gopman said that there is one correction to the August 13, 2003 minutes (item 16) where it stated Bill Koppel asked for the people who were getting signatures on petitions to dissolve the MAC, to have a forum to speak to us so that we can understand what their concerns are. Stan Price, in fact, made that comment.

Motion by Glen Gopman to approve the minutes of August 13, 2003 with the above correction.

Motion carried.

12. Ken Friedman stated that the next MAC meeting will be on October 22, 2003 at the Middle School.
13. Jorge Fernandez stated that he would provide a spreadsheet to show why the QNIP debt is 11.7% of direct expenses (Police, Public Works, and Parks & Recreation) or \$338,905 per year as listed on the Estimated Impact on UMSA Budget handout, distributed at the first NE MAC meeting. The QNIP debt service must be paid for approximately 29 years. He will also provide a list of what projects by QNIP are in the area.
14. Glen Gopman asked that in addition to QNIP that anything else that shows up in funded or unfunded projects for infrastructure, such as roads and drainage, from County plans be obtained. Jorge Fernandez stated that one County plan is the TIP (Transit Improvement Plan). Glen stated there is also a stormwater improvement plan. Glen wanted to know if we have to gather this information. Jorge Fernandez said he could try to get the information for us. Glen would like to know in the last three years what has been done in our MAC area and what projects are on the board. Jorge said that they are broken down by Commission Districts; he said that he could ask if they could be broken down further than that to just inside our boundaries. Glen said he has looked into the budgeting system but he cannot tell from the description of some of the projects where

they are. Glen stated that it is very important for us to understand where the real infrastructure needs and unfunded projects are for our area. Jorge said that he would try to get this information for us. Jorge stated this would include the following departments: DERM, Public Works, CICC (Capital Improvement Coordination). Jorge stated there are 5-year plan (TIP) and 20-year plans.

15. Glen Gopman said he has budgets for Miami Shores for anyone who wants them, such as those on the budget committee. This is a city very similar to ours. Its per capita tax roll is about the same as ours. They are about one-half of our total tax roll. They are less than our population. The cost structure he thinks would be fairly similar. He also has budgets from the City of Palmetto Bay, which are also available on their website. He knows that Jill Perez could take on the Parks budget because as part of the Homeowners Association she works with the Parks Department and they should be giving her a budget for both Ojus and Highland Oaks Park. Ken Friedman stated he will appoint her to get the numbers from the Parks Department. Glen said he thinks she will be happy to do that. Glen said he will volunteer to contact the League of Cities who did a salary survey of City Managers, Finance Directors, and other administrators that we can use for the budget committee. Glen asked Rick Golden if he would do some research and investigation on the annexation process as one of our options. The City of Medley has done two annexations. North Miami has done an annexation. Jorge Fernandez stated that Chapter 20 of the Miami-Dade Code also addresses annexations.
16. Bill Koppel said Jason at 305-375-2820 can be reached for information regarding the date and time of the next Budget Committee meeting.
17. Jorge Fernandez asked Bill Koppel to give him a copy of minutes of the budget committee meetings. Jorge also mentioned that the website is up regarding incorporations and annexations.
18. Ken Friedman asked attendees for input of what improvements they want in their city so that they can be included in the budget. He has a list of forty items that he came up with already.
19. Meeting was adjourned.

**Roslyn B. Weisblum
Recording Secretary**